

Acquisition Reform Success Story



Airborne Laser (ABL) Program

Program Manager (PM) : Col Michael W. Booen
Program Executive Officer: Mr Harry E Schulte
Contractor: Boeing/TRW/Lockheed-Martin
Contractor PM: Mr Paul Shennum (Boeing)
OPR: Maj Bob Devaney, SMC/TMP DSN 263-3772

Program Description

ABL will develop and field an airborne laser weapon system for lethal defense against TBMs during their boost phase. The PDRR contract includes the design, fabrication, integration, and test of a high-energy laser weapon system on a modified Boeing 747-400F aircraft, culminating in the destruction of a boosting missile in 2002.

How Streamlining Makes a Difference

Three initiatives illustrate the continued emphasis on acquisition reform. 1) Electronic Commercial Payments: Voucherless commercial aircraft payments clause incorporated in the PDRR contract using standard commercial practices, including schedule for electronic funds transfer (EFT). MOA negotiated between ABL SPO/DCMC/DFAS allows automatic payments to contractor. This eliminates labor costs associated with voucher coordination and submittal by the contractor, as well as, government labor eliminated by the EFT process. 2) Quarterly Design Review (QDR) Process: In order to work towards a successful PDR, Team ABL instituted QDRs in an IPT environment. Individual IPTs brief their progress since the last QDR to the other IPTs and to the Analysis and Integration Teams (AITs). Changes made, trade study and Cost-As-an-Independent-Variable results, weight reduction initiatives, and proposed changes are briefed. These presentations are done without pre-briefs. Changes are represented with a current design “fly-through” using CATIA design software. IPT and AIT cross-feed during these sessions is done on the spot in open forum in accordance with the ABL Program “Open Kimono” policy. This process leads to the resolution of problems and approval of proposed design changes on the spot with government, Boeing/TRW/Lockheed-Martin team, and subcontractor input and consensus. At the end of the week, a half-day session is provided with the program leadership (AF SPO Director, ACC ABL leadership, and the contract program managers from Team ABL) to review progress and decisions made. 3) IPT Pricing of Contract Changes: Early agreement between government and contractor IPTs dramatically reduces proposal preparation cost and schedule, and eliminates “negotiation” of contract changes. This process places the responsibility for determining scope and resource requirements to the empowered, affected IPT members.

MEASURE

IPT Pricing for Contract Changes:

Number of Contract Changes using this Process	5
Average Value per Change	\$7.1M
Average Time: Conception of Change to Final Award	85 days
Average Change Proposal Cost	\$49.7K

Bottom Line: Using voucherless payments for commercial aircraft purchase (**cheaper**). Conducting integrated design review to streamline the design process (**better**). Performing IPT pricing for contract changes (**faster**).